



Rebuilding Afghanistan

Weekly Activity Update for November 19 – December 3, 2003

Issue 39

United States Agency for International Development

STRENGTHENING THE GOVERNMENT

Program Goals

- Support the Bonn process: the Constitutional, Human Rights, and Judicial Commissions; the elections scheduled for June 2004; and a free and independent media.
- Improve government planning, budgeting, revenue generation (e.g., customs), monetary management, and private-sector related legal and regulatory frameworks.
- Build capacity to carry out other legitimate government functions and support reconstruction of health, judicial, education, economic, agricultural and transportation infrastructure.

Recent Progress:

Included in this week's update is information regarding the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan's (TISA's) recent preparations for the Constitutional Loya Jirga, which will commence on December 13, 2003.

- **Constitutional Loya Jirga (CLJ) Registration:** General registration has been successfully completed for the Emergency Loya Jirga (ELJ) district representatives. These representatives are to elect delegates to the CLJ. As of November 12, the overall average turnout for all provinces stood at 76 percent. This number is increasing with the reporting of updated numbers and with the continuation of registration for latecomers in all provinces. The registration process ensured all groups would be represented in the CLJ—including but not limited to women, Kuchis (nomads), internally displaced persons, Hindu/Sikh persons and refugees in Iran and Pakistan.
- **Distribution of Draft Constitution:** Distribution of official and unofficial copies of the draft constitution continues. 5,400 of the 7,000 official copies of the draft have already been disseminated. The Constitutional Commission's secretariat delivered official copies to international organizations, embassies and Kabul-based media outlets. The Afghan post office is continuing distribution to government offices at the provincial and district levels. On November 15 and 16, 40,000 unofficial copies were distributed as a free insert in the weekly news and women's magazines "Killid" and "Morsal." An additional 60,000 unofficial copies will be distributed through the Constitutional Commission's regional offices and their local partners to NGOs, religious leaders, teachers and other community members.
- **CLJ Public Information Campaign:** The Constitutional Commission secretariat has released a plan for the CLJ public education campaign. Its themes are national unity, security, social justice, accordance with Islamic principals, respect for human rights, Afghanistan's international legal obligations, accountability and democracy.

Recent Progress (continued):

- **CLJ Public Education Campaign (continued):** The plan has three stages: first, a campaign defining what is a constitution; second, a campaign on the rules and procedures of the CLJ elections and the eligibility criteria for CLJ delegates; and third, a campaign on consensus building, human rights, communication skills, and conflict resolution for the CLJ delegates. Subsequent to the conclusion of the CLJ, a critical stage in public education will commence to explain the Constitution and its substance to the public, set realistic expectations for its implementation and create a sense of ownership of the document among Afghans.
- **Central Bank Security Improvements:** Da Afghanistan Bank (DAB) is Afghanistan's central bank. To improve DAB security, USAID has assisted in the training of bank guards to better manage the DAB employee-only areas. DAB has issued ID cards to all employees at its head office, and is planning to extend the ID card program to its regional offices.
- **Tax Administration:** To increase central government revenue through taxes, tax identification numbers (TIN) are being issued to a variety of entities. As of November 13, the Ministry of Finance has issued 353 TINs, of which 282 were issued to importers and 31 to non-government organizations (NGOs). Traders without a TIN will not be allowed to import. Diplomatic missions, international organizations, ISAF, US military and importers of fresh foodstuffs and automobiles will continue to be able to import without a TIN.
- **Emergency Power in Kabul:** USAID provided emergency diesel fuel for the thermal power station in Kabul. A total of 72 trucks (2.9 million liters) have been received thus far. To date, 4,209 megawatt-hours of electricity have been supplied to the Kabul power grid.

"New Constitution: Uniting Afghanistan"

The Constitutional Commission's slogan for the CLJ.

EXPANDING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

Program Goals

- 1,000 schools and at least 18 provincial women's centers rehabilitated or constructed.
- 10.2 million textbooks printed & distributed for 2003 school year
- 30,000 classroom teachers trained.
- 80,000 students enrolled in accelerated learning programs to reach their appropriate grade level.

Recent Progress

- **Schools in Ghazni:** USAID has built/rehabilitated over 200 primary and secondary schools and teacher training institutes throughout Afghanistan. In Ghazni Province there are roughly 420 active schools. 92 of the schools are buildings while the rest are tents. USAID is currently constructing over 20 new school buildings in Ghazni and Kabul. In the photo to the right, taken by Colonel Darrel Branhagen of the US Army, school children took a break from their chemistry lesson to pose for the camera.



Photo of school children in a small town southwest of Ghazni

REVITALIZING AGRICULTURE/CREATING JOBS

Program Goals

- 100% increase in average productivity for 500,000 farm families through improved technologies, better infrastructure, and access to markets.
- 615 irrigation projects repaired/constructed to increase water use efficiency by 50% and agricultural productivity by 20%.
- 1000 km of improved village feeder roads rehabilitated.
- 1000 village agricultural market centers built.

Recent Progress

RAMP: Revitalizing Afghanistan's Agricultural Markets Program
RAMP is a three-year program aimed at enhancing the food security and incomes of Afghanistan's rural population. It has two principal objectives: increase agricultural productivity and output and facilitate effective linkages between producers, processors and markets. The program's budget is \$150 million.

- **Agricultural Technology in Afghanistan:** Through RAMP, the Badam Bagh agricultural laboratory in Kabul was rehabilitated and recently re-opened. It is now the site of the first new seed health and quality testing laboratory in Afghanistan. When the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan and the Ministry of Agriculture adopt a formal seed policy, all seed imported into the country should meet specific certification standards—the seed should be accurately labeled and free of pests and pathogens. Seed health and quality testing facilities like the Badam Bagh laboratory will assure farmers and agricultural officials that these standards are being met, and will pave the way toward Afghans re-entering the global economy. The photos to the right show before and after pictures of the laboratory.



Badam Bagh agricultural laboratory (before rehabilitation).



Badam Bagh newly rebuilt seed laboratory (after rehabilitation).

Note: Progress on the Afghanistan Ring Road is reported in USAID's Weekly Afghan Road Update.